

THE INDIANAPOLIS RADIO CLUB - FOUNDED IN 1914
(The oldest continuously meeting Amateur Radio Club in the United States)

THE AMACHEWER FOR April, 2002

NEXT MEETING is April 12, 2001 at the Indianapolis Training Center.

Alex Whitaker is a past president of the IHRS and will give a presentation on vintage radio.

2002 IRC Officers:

President:	Bill Goodall-K9DBY	255-4749
Vice President:	Tom Chance- K9XV	783-1093
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Chief Operator:	John Lee- W9GRE	251-3793
News Editor:	Dave Kalmikoff-W9XH	255-9285

Minutes from our March, 2002 meeting:

Meeting called to order at 7:30 on Friday, March 8, 2002.

Meeting was held in the downstairs room. Everyone introduced themselves. Wade the treasurer gave his month report and a motion was made to accept the treasurer's report. Bill suggested that we have ID badges and asked everyone if they wanted it. It was accepted and we passed around a sign up sheet and Merle Young will make the badges for the group and the club will furnish the first badge and if you loose it the second will be on that person.

At 7:45PM, Chuck Crist introduced Karl Luetzelchweb K9LA and his wife Vicky from Ft. Wayne who would speak on propagation. He showed sides and also had hand outs, and the presentation ended at 8:45PM. There was question and answer time after the presentation. Meeting was adjourned at 9:00PM. There were 23 people in attendance including the guest speaker and his wife. There were 22 on the list for ID badges.

News Tidbit

Dave Gingrich K9DC, our February speaker this year, will be traveling to South Korea soon, and has obtained a Koran Amateur License for this trip. Wish him a good trip and good DX!

HAMS BEWARE.....By W9YZ

"Less than 2:1 SWR from 3.5 to 30 Mhz" is a claim made for an antenna that looks like a folded dipole fed with coax. Statements include "Used by various US government agencies including the military". The more complete information has not been included in recent advertisements. In a 1986 catalog the same antenna is displayed. Quoting from the published information, "When compared to a resonant dipole on the lower bands the AC-3.5-30 radiates a signal approximately two "S" units below a dipole cut to a specific frequency". WOW, WOW again. Using the generally accepted definition that 1 "S" unit equals 6 DB the following radiated power levels would be: 1,000 watts delivered to this antenna, the radiated power would be 62.5 watts and for 100 watts delivered to the antenna, the radiated power would be 6.25 watts. This would reduce the effective radiated power of a one KW output amplifier to less than a 100 watt output transceiver. The 100 watt transceiver would be reduced to almost as low as a QRP rig.

Recently I was talking on 40 meters SSB with a new ham who was about to order one of these broadband, low SWR antennas that a friend had told him, "One antenna, low SWR, all bands, great antenna". I suggested he hold the order until he received the photo copy of the information which I would mail to him. Two weeks later I received a QSL card and thanks from him. He had discussed this antenna with other more experienced hams who recommend several dipoles cut for various bands and stay clear of this fancy dummy load. (The coax is connected to the lower side and center of the folded dipole. The top side has some carbon resistors which act as a dummy load.) Much of the success in sales is due to the ignorance of the customer. This is not to say customers are ignorant, only that they do not know all the information behind behind sales pitch presented by a human or by an advertisement.

Now for another rip-off. MFJ has been running full page ads for a morse code reader that displays the letters and shows the code speed.....Just hold it up to the speaker and it works... Yes it works if the speaker is loud, yes really loud and no background noise. It reads a few letters then the background noise with nonsense speed numbers such as 430 wpm anything the little converter hears. With a code practice oscillator quite loud and no background noise it does pretty well, but in QRN I can read the morse thru the noise with my mental filters which many human ears have. That is if the speed is at 24 wpm or less. Its a jungle out there guys, 73, Ron Williams, W9YZ

Sent by Ron Williams, W9YZ (thanks, Ron!)

ARRL News

- * P5/4L4FN North Korean operation proclaimed valid for DXCC
- * FCC puts added pressure on amateur microwave band

- * Vanity backlog could be vanquished by next week
- * Wisconsin becomes the latest PRB-1 state
- * New Mexico amateurs support fire response
- * K5MP named new Hurricane Watch Net manager
- * FCC announces weekend Web site, electronic filing outage
- * Solar Update

* IN BRIEF:

This weekend on the radio
 Certification and Continuing Education course registration
 ARRL to be represented at NAB convention
 British ham-sailor expresses gratitude for amateurs' assistance
 Meteor scatter rally announced
 New England QSO Party set for May
 Vote on QST Cover Plaque Award

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==>DXCC TO ACCEPT P5/4L4FN CONTACTS FOR CREDIT

To great sighs of relief from the DX community, the ARRL this week announced that it will accept SSB contacts with P5/4L4FN in North Korea for DXCC credit. Operator Ed Giorgadze of the Republic of Georgia, has been active from the capital city of Pyongyang since early last November. Valid SSB contacts from the onset of the P5/4L4FN operation last fall now may be submitted for DXCC credit.

"The ARRL has now received adequate evidence that the operation by Mr. Giorgadze is being conducted with the knowledge and approval of telecommunications officials in Pyongyang," said ARRL Membership Services Manager Wayne Mills, N7NG. "At the present time, this approval is limited to SSB operation." Giorgadze has been operating with oral permission from North Korean authorities, but Mills said the ARRL is satisfied on the basis of written information submitted that the P5/4L4FN operation conforms with DXCC rules and should be accepted for credit.

Mills cited DXCC Rule 7, which states "Any Amateur Radio operation should take place only with the complete approval and understanding of appropriate administration officials." The rule continues, "In any case, credit will be given for contacts where adequate evidence of authorization by appropriate authorities exists."

Mills said the ARRL Awards Committee met and concurred that the operation should be accredited.

The P5/4L4FN operation is not a DXpedition. Giorgadze is employed by the United Nations World Food Program and often spends as much as 12 hours a day on the job, operating in his off hours.

According to The Daily DX, Giorgadze learned this week that he will be in

North Korea at least until July 2003. He tried for more than two years to obtain permission to operate Amateur Radio and finally was given the okay last year to bring an ICOM IC-706MkIIIG into the country. A favorite hangout has been 21.225 MHz (he works split and listens up). He's also been a frequent visitor to 10 meters. Now that his operation has been okayed for DXCC, Giorgadze has indicated that he plans to be more active on the air.

While P5/4L4FN has been doing some RTTY operation in addition to SSB, those contacts are not yet being accepted for DXCC credit.

Bruce Paige, KK5DO, has been acting as QSL manager and liaison for P5/4L4FN. He said this week that the first QSL cards should be going out within a few weeks. Paige offers an on-line log, additional news and information and a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the operation on his AMSAT Net Web site <<http://www.amsatnet.com>>. Click on the "P5 North Korea" link.

==>FCC PROCEEDING PUTS NEW PRESSURE ON AMATEUR MICROWAVE BAND

The FCC has again targeted Amateur Radio's primary allocation at 2390 to 2400 MHz for possible sharing or use by other radio services. A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (WT Docket 02-55)--released in mid-March but not yet available for public comment--invites comments on either sharing the band with public safety services being displaced from 800 MHz or moving amateurs elsewhere. The ARRL plans to file comments in the proceeding.

The FCC says increasing incidents of harmful interference to public safety systems in the 800-MHz band prompted the proceeding, "Improving Public Safety Communications in the 800 MHz Band." To alleviate the problem, the Commission now is looking into restructuring the 800 MHz band and moving some occupants elsewhere.

"In this proceeding, if commenting parties believe that incumbent amateur services cannot co-exist with relocated 800 MHz services," the FCC said, "we seek comment on whether incumbent amateur services could be relocated, what spectrum could be used for their relocation, and what procedures would apply to such relocation." The FCC NPRM identifies 2390-2400 MHz as an "Unlicensed PCS Band." Unlicensed, asynchronous PCS devices were authorized there in 1995, but Amateur Radio remains primary.

The FCC also will seek comments on whether existing UPCS operations could continue in the band or be forced to cease. It also wants input on "the suitability of the 2390-2400 MHz band as replacement spectrum and whether there are other band segments with which this band could be paired." The FCC noted that the adjacent 2385-2390 MHz segment already is slated for auction.

The FCC said its discussion of 2390-2400 MHz and other segments in terms of replacement spectrum was intended to be "illustrative rather than

exclusive" and that other bands "may also merit consideration."

Just last summer, the FCC invited comments on its proposals to reallocate some spectrum in the 2390 to 2400 MHz amateur segment--as well as in the non-amateur 1.9 and 2.1 GHz bands--for possible use by unspecified mobile and fixed services. The Commission has proposed 2390 to 2400 MHz and other bands to support the introduction of advanced wireless systems, including so-called third-generation (3G) mobile systems. The FCC also has asked for comments on whether amateurs could share the band with government users.

The complete NPRM is available via the FCC Web site http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-02-81A1.doc. The FCC will officially invite comments for 30 days after the NPRM is published in the Federal Register. Reply comments will be due 60 days following publication in the Federal Register.

==>FCC COULD CONQUER VANITY BACKLOG IN A WEEK

If the FCC continues to process vanity applications at its current rate, the application backlog could disappear by next week. The FCC continues to whittle away the vanity backlog, issuing another 474 grants over the last five processing runs--although the last run only yielded 26 grants from one day's worth of applications. As of April 5, the FCC had processed vanity applications received at its Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, office through March 8.

At the current pace--and barring any difficulties--the remaining backlog of some 500 vanity applications could be wiped out by April 12. The FCC does not process vanity applications on weekends. The typical wait for action on a vanity call sign application is about 18 days from the time the application is received by the Private Wireless Division Licensing and Technical Analysis Branch in Gettysburg. At its peak, the vanity backlog was estimated at more than 2000 applications.

The processing of routine Amateur Service applications has been unaffected by the vanity problems. The vanity troubles began after about two weeks of paper vanity applications sent off for anthrax decontamination were not returned to Gettysburg. FCC policy continues to give equal priority to paper and electronic vanity applications, and when the paper applications were waylaid, vanity processing ground to a halt. FCC staffers--with ARRL's assistance--used payment information to contact those who had filed and have them submit new applications.

The FCC said last month that it's finally starting to receive the applications that had been missing and were at the core of the major vanity holdup that had extended through much of the fall and winter. Outside of a short hiatus about a month ago to deal with a processing anomaly, the FCC has been proceeding cautiously with its effort to get current again on vanity applications.

Amateurs with pending applications may take advantage of the FCC Call Center's toll free number, 888-CALL FCC (888-225-5322) or may initiate an application search via the Universal Licensing System (ULS) <<http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls>>. Information on the amateur vanity call sign system is available on the FCC's Vanity Call Sign page <<http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/amateur/callsigns/vanity/index.html>>.

==>WISCONSIN GOVERNOR SIGNS AMATEUR ANTENNA BILL

Wisconsin Gov Scott McCallum this week signed AB368, the Amateur Radio FCC PRB-1 Amateur Radio Antenna Protection Act into law in that state. The governor's stroke of the pen April 2 makes the Badger State the 16th to incorporate the language of the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1 into its statutes. The new law becomes effective immediately.

"After summarizing the contents of the law, Gov McCallum made a special point of noting the important role that Wisconsin hams play in providing emergency and public communication support throughout the state," said ARRL Wisconsin Section Government Liaison Jim Lackore, AD9X, who was present at the signing. The Amateur Radio antenna bill was one of six pieces of legislation that McCallum signed into law April 2 during a ceremony at the Oshkosh Senior Center.

AB 368 mirrors the language of the limited federal preemption. It would require that ordinances or resolutions affecting the placement, screening or height of Amateur Radio antennas or support structures have a "reasonable and clearly defined aesthetic, public health or safety objective." Such an ordinance or resolution also must represent "the minimum practical regulation" necessary to accomplish the locality's objectives and must reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio communication.

On hand in addition to Lackore as the governor signed the measure were Wisconsin Section Manager Don Michalski, W9IXG; Wisconsin Section Emergency Coordinator Dr. Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR; Ozaukee County Supervisor and Republican official Gus Wirth Jr, W9BTN; and the original sponsor of AB368, former Wisconsin State Rep Joan Wade, who credited the efforts of the late Jim Romelfanger, K9ZZ, in getting the bill through the legislature.

Romelfanger--a Wisconsin Amateur Radio activist, ARRL Public Information Coordinator and editor of the Badger State Smoke Signals ham radio newspaper--died December 22. He had worked closely with Wade's office to promote introduction of PRB-1 legislation for several years. Michalski has characterized passage of the measure "a tribute" to Romelfanger.

Michalski said one of the reasons for the passage of AB368 was a strong team and significant support from Wisconsin's Amateur Radio community. "Our deep appreciation to all of you who took the time to contact your legislators," Michalski said. "The system works!"

A PRB-1 measure has been under consideration in Tennessee, and similar measures have been proposed for introduction in other states. More information on antenna regulation is available on the ARRL Antenna Restrictions Web page
<<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/antenna-restrictions.html>>.

==>NEW MEXICO ARES/RACES TEAMS SUPPORT FIRE RESPONSE

Amateurs in New Mexico supported the activities of responding agencies in late March when four wildfires broke out at approximately the same time within a few miles of each other. One of the fires destroyed more than two dozen houses.

Working as a combined Lincoln County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) team, amateurs provided local communication support as well as an HF link between the fire incident command post and the state emergency operations center in the capital city of Santa Fe.

"This was the first time the team members wore both hats during an actual event," said Lincoln County Emergency Coordinator and RACES Officer Rick Sohl, K5RIC.

Amateurs also helped the Rio Hondo Chapter of the American Red Cross, which provided staff, equipment and food to feed fire-suppression teams as well as those staffing the incident command headquarters, other support staffers and those forced to take refuge in Red Cross shelters or seek first aid. More than 1000 people had to be evacuated.

Sohl said the so-called Alto Fire got its start March 23 in Lincoln County and destroyed 29 homes and a barn. "Someone putting fireplace ashes outside without making sure the ashes were out caused this fire," he said. The blaze burned nearly 1000 acres. A second fire started in Otero County on the Mescalero Apache Reservation. Called the Hondo Fire, it subsequently crossed into Lincoln County and burned some 17,000 acres.

Sohl said local repeater nets coordinated support personal, equipment disbursement and food distribution. In addition to the HF link with the state EOC, the ARES/RACES team networked the Red Cross shelter, first aid station, fire command post, three county-wide gateway net control stations and five mobile radio units via Amateur Radio. "The two fires required the Red Cross to set up two shelters and first aid stations to deal with two areas," Sohl said. "Two smaller fires were being suppressed at the same time."

The ARES/RACES team was able to integrate smoothly into the Red Cross response activities, Sohl observed. "Feeding this many people can be a logistical problem," he said. "This chapter has provided such support each year during fire season, so they know how to do the job correctly and have found that a radio network can improve efficiency at a time when it can

make a major difference."

Sohl said this week that while the Alto and Hondo fires now are out, high winds plus a warmer-than-normal winter and a lack of snowfall have combined to create an extremely high fire danger situation.

In all, more than three dozen amateurs--including ARRL New Mexico Section Manager Joe Knight, W5PDY--were involved in providing communication support during the fire emergency. More information is available on the Lincoln County ARES/RACES Web site <<http://www.zianet.com/sohl>>.

==>CHANGING OF THE GUARD ANNOUNCED AT HURRICANE WATCH NET

Mike Pilgrim, K5MP, of Boca Raton, Florida, is the new manager of the Hurricane Watch Net. Pilgrim, who has been the net's second-in-command, takes over from Jerry Herman, N3BDW, of Bowie, Maryland. Herman announced this week that he was retiring from the net manager's post after nearly 14 years--11 of them as manager--and turning the reins over to Pilgrim, effective April 5.

"I feel very comfortable turning the net over to Mike, and I know that he will continue to maintain the high standards that we have become known for," Herman said in his announcement letter to HWN members.

Pilgrim has been licensed since 1957, and he's been affiliated with the HWN for about five years. A long-time ARRL member and member and net control station for the Maritime Mobile Service Net, he retired from IBM in 1998 after 33 years. Pilgrim also is the creator of the International Boat Watch Net <<http://www.chasediversified.com/boatwatch/>>.

Founded in 1965 by Gerry Murphy, K8YUW, the Hurricane Watch Net activates 14.325 MHz whenever a hurricane is within 300 miles of projected landfall or becomes a serious threat to a populated area. The net collects observed or measured weather data from amateurs in the affected area and passes those to National Hurricane Center hurricane forecasters via W4EHW <<http://www.fiu.edu/orgs/w4ehw/>>. The net also relays weather bulletins as they become available from the National Weather Service and the National Hurricane Center.

Herman said he was very proud of net's accomplishments during his tenure as net manager. "During that time we have been awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award from the National Hurricane Conference and the International Humanitarian Award from ARRL," he noted. "We have established a very good working relationship with the forecasters at the National Hurricane Center, the ARRL and the FCC." The HWN also developed a Web site <<http://www.hwn.org/>> that's been favorably received, Herman added.

"I realize that none of these accomplishments would have been possible without the support and hard work of you, the net members who made it

happen," Herman concluded "I thank each of you for your support during my tenure and ask that you continue to support Mike in the same manner."

Herman said that while he's stepping down as net manager he won't be stepping away from the net. "I will now have the time to resume on the air operations as a net control," he said. "I look forward to this role and to a long relationship with the net." Both Herman and Pilgrim attended the National Hurricane Conference this week in Orlando, where Herman officially passed the baton.

Accolades from several quarters followed Herman's announcement of the changing of the guard. ARRL Field Organization/Public Service Team Manager Steve Ewald, WV1X, thanked Herman on behalf of the League for leadership over the years and said ARRL looks forward to working with Pilgrim.

Julio Ripoll, WD4JR, the assistant Amateur Radio coordinator at the National Hurricane Center's W4EHW, also expressed his appreciation. "Thank you for your dedication to public service and Amateur Radio for so many years," Ripoll said.

Retired ARRL Field Services Manager Rick Palm, K1CE, invited Herman to visit him in Florida and enjoy a little fishing.

==>FCC ANNOUNCES WEB SITE, ELECTRONIC FILING INTERRUPTION

The FCC has announced that its Web site functions, databases and telephone service will be interrupted the weekend of April 5-7. From 9 PM Eastern Standard Time Friday, April 5, through 1 PM Eastern Daylight Time on Sunday, April 7, access to the FCC's electronic filing systems--including the Commission Registration System (CORES) and Universal Licensing System (ULS)--will be temporarily interrupted during preventative maintenance.

In addition, access to the entire FCC Web site, electronic databases and other information and telephone services will be interrupted. E-mail sent to the FCC during the down time will be queued for delivery when the system is restored on April 7.

The FCC asks that all electronic documents be filed before 9 PM EST on April 5 or after 1 PM EDT on April 7. In addition to CORES and ULS, systems affected include the Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS), the Electronic Document Management System (EDOCS), and the OET Experimental Licensing Branch Electronic Filing Site.

For more information, see the FCC Public Notice
<http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Miscellaneous/Public_Notices/2002/pnmc0202.html>.

==>SOLAR UPDATE

Propagation prophet Tad Cook, K7VWV, Seattle, Washington, reports: Average

daily solar flux rose last week by 27 points, and average sunspot numbers was up by more than 9 points. We've had active geomagnetic conditions this week caused by a stream of high-speed solar wind. This has yielded auroral displays at high latitudes. Saturday through Wednesday were very active, and the planetary K index was four during several three-hour periods.

Solar flux for the short term is expected to peak around 215 for Friday and Saturday, then drift below 200 after Tuesday. Geomagnetic conditions could become slightly active or unsettled on Saturday. Currently there is a large complex of sunspots crossing the visible solar disk. A helioseismic image also shows a pair of large sunspots on the sun's far side.

Average daily sunspot numbers for the last five quarters, from January 1, 2001, to March 31, 2002, were 147.3, 164.8, 170.4, 198.1 and 178.3. Average daily solar flux for the same five periods was 164.4, 166.7, 175.5, 219.1 and 203.9. Both solar flux and sunspot numbers were higher this past quarter than the first three quarters of 2001, but lower than the last quarter of last year, which had a lot of activity.

Average sunspot numbers for the past five months, November through March, were 178.6, 217.5, 189, 194.5 and 153.1. Average daily solar flux for the same five months was 215.8, 236.5, 227.3, 205, and 179.5.

We can definitely see the peak that occurred around December, and that January of this year had more activity than November of last year. But March solar flux and sunspots were definitely down.

Sunspot numbers for March 28 through April 3 were 144, 189, 171, 133, 189, 262 and 162, with a mean of 178.6. The 10.7-cm flux was 176.2, 181.3, 188.7, 204.4, 207, 206 and 209.4, with a mean of 196.1. Estimated planetary A indices were 6, 7, 17, 14, 16, 15 and 13 with a mean of 12.6.

==>IN BRIEF:

* This weekend on the radio: The MARAC County Hunters Contest (SSB), the SP DX Contest, the EA RTTY Contest and the Missouri QSO Party are the weekend of April 6-7. JUST AHEAD: The 222 MHz Spring Sprint is Apr 9. The YLRL DX to NA YL Contest (CW) is April 10-12. The JIDX HF CW Contest, the QRP ARCI Spring QSO Party, the EU Spring Sprint (SSB) His Majesty the King of Spain Contest, the Yuri Gagarin International DX Contest and the UBA Spring Contest (SSB) are the weekend of April 13-14. See the ARRL Contest Branch page <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/>> and the WA7BNM Contest Calendar <<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>> for more info.

* Certification and Continuing Education course registration: Registration for the Level I ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (EC-001) will remain open through the April 6-7 weekend. Registration for

the Level II Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (EC-002) and for the Antenna Modeling Course (EC-004) opens Monday, April 8; registration for the Level III Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (EC-003) opens Monday, April 15. All registrations open at 4 PM Eastern Time. ARRL Emergency Communications courses must be completed in order, starting with Level I. To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/cce>> and the C-CE Links found there. For more information, contact Certification and Continuing Education Program Coordinator Dan Miller, K3UFG, cce@arrl.org.

* ARRL to be represented at NAB convention: Amateur Radio again will have a presence at this year's National Association of Broadcasters convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 6-11. NAB donates booth space to the ARRL, and the League's booth (L3316) will be staffed by local volunteers. Serving as this year's "booth coordinator" is Bill Cornelius, K8XC, president of the Las Vegas Radio Amateur Club. The ARRL booth is visited by hams in the broadcasting business and others interested in technology and electronics. ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, and Pacific Division Director Jim Maxwell, W6CF, also plan to be on hand. On Wednesday, April 10, hams will gather at the Las Vegas Hilton for the annual Amateur Radio Operator's Reception. CQ and Kenwood Communications are sponsoring the event, which is expected to draw nearly 1000 amateurs. ARRL donated several publications for door prizes. NAB Vice President for Science and Technology John Marino, KR10, will emcee the reception. President Haynie, Director Maxwell and others are expected to speak.

* British ham-sailor expresses gratitude for amateurs' assistance: David Beane, G0TAG, this week expressed his thanks to members of the Maritime Mobile Service Net, who assisted him and his wife, Sarah, after their sailing vessel Tao went aground March 26 off Cuba. Amateurs were able to contact Cuban authorities, who secured the vessel and later helped to refloat it. "Having got our brains back together after our nasty incident we wish to send our thanks to the guys on the Maritime Mobile Net who acted with such efficiency when we went aground on the north coast of Cuba," Beane said. "The Cubans helped to lay out our anchors and stood by us during the night." They also arranged for a tow boat, Beane said, but as it turned out, a tow was not needed as the couple managed to get their sailboat into deeper water by themselves. Cuban fishermen then escorted the Tao into the ocean through a gap in the reef, and in port at Moa, two divers checked out the underside for damage--all at no cost, "just a lot of smiling and waving." Beane said.

* Meteor scatter rally announced: Meteor scatter enthusiasts now have an operating event to call their own. The 2002 North American Meteor Scatter Rally, sponsored by WA5UFH, KM5ES, and K1JT, is aimed at promoting the use of VHF/UHF meteor-scatter communication techniques. The event is set for April 27 through May 5--to take advantage of the Eta Aquarids meteor shower. The idea is to work as many stations as possible in as many grid squares as possible via meteor scatter on the bands above 50 MHz. Rally rules and entry forms are posted on the WA5UFH Meteor Scatter Web site

<<http://www.qsl.net/wa5ufh/>> as well as on the WSJT Meteor Scatter/Weak Signal Group site
<<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wsjtgroup/?yguid=6309253>>.--Randy Tipton, WA5UFH

* New England QSO Party set for May: A combined QSO party for the six New England states--Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont--will take place the first weekend in May. It will replace the individual state QSO parties. The inaugural NEQP will be held Saturday and Sunday, May 4-5, starting at 2000 UTC Saturday until 0300 UTC Sunday (4 PM until 11 PM Saturday Eastern Daylight Time) and resuming at 1100 UTC Sunday until 2400 UTC Sunday (7 AM until 8 PM Eastern Daylight Time Sunday). New England stations may work anyone. The NEQP includes mobile or fixed categories for single operator--high-power, low-power and QRP--and multi-operator, single transmitter. Certificates will be awarded to the top scorers in each New England county, US state, Canadian province and DXCC entity, and special plaques will be awarded to top scorers. For full information, visit the New England QSO Party Web site <<http://www.neqp.org>>. Address questions via e-mail to info@neqp.org.

* Vote on QST Cover Plaque Award: The winner of the QST Cover Plaque Award for March was Jim Millner, WB2REM, for his article "I-Link, the .WAV of the Future." Congratulations, Jim! The winner of the QST Cover Plaque award--given to the author of the best article in each issue--is determined by a vote of ARRL members. Voting takes place each month on the Cover Plaque Poll Web page, <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/qstvote.html>>. As soon as your copy arrives, cast a ballot for your favorite article in the April 2002 issue of QST. Voting ends April 30.

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The ARRL Letter is published Fridays, 50 times each year, by the American Radio Relay League--The National Association For Amateur Radio--225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111; tel 860-594-0200; fax 860-594-0259;

Miscellaneous:

Please feel free to e-mail (W9XH@aol.com) or call me (255-9285) with any pertinent news for next month's Amachewer.

73,

David Kalmikoff, W9XH
News Editor for the Indianapolis Radio Club